

Local Health Personnel Branch

RESPECTING YOUR CO-WORKERS

Unfortunately, disrespect for one's co-workers (or subordinates) is not that uncommon and often causes people to leave their jobs. For employers, this means losing good people and having to hire and train new ones. For co-workers, it means picking up the slack until new employees can be trained and having to get use to working with new people. The saddest part of the lack of respect in the workplace is that many people do not realize they are being disrespectful. They are not trying to hurt their co-worker's feelings, but there is a lack of effort to acknowledge that they may be offending them.

The Actions to Avoid

How can we avoid offending the people we work with? It seems as if it should be obvious, but most do not realize that it is being done. Take a look now at the actions that may offend your co-workers (in no particular order).

- Having loud telephone conversations
- Not cleaning up after yourself in the staff kitchen
- Showing up late for meetings
- Looking at a co-worker's computer screen over his or her shoulder
- Taking supplies from a co-worker's desk
- Neglecting to say please and thank you
- Wearing too much perfume
- Chewing gum loudly
- Taking the last of something without replacing it
- Talking behind someone's back
- Asking someone to lie for you
- Blaming someone else when you are at fault
- Taking credit for someone else's work
- Asking a subordinate to do something unrelated to work, i.e. run errands
- Trying to convert others to your political or religious beliefs
- Telling offensive jokes
- Smoking in common areas
- Not pulling your own weight
- Complaining about the company, boss, and co-workers
- Having a condescending attitude toward others

Take a moment and monitor your behavior to see if you may be unknowingly guilty of these actions. Demonstrating personal and professional respect is a fundamental expectation for any workplace. It is important that we all understand the value and potential impact of workplace courtesy and respect. Encourage mutual respect with Time, Patience, Listening, Laughing, and maintain it with Integrity.